

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to join in Senator SESSIONS' comments earlier today regarding the departure of Ed Haden, a staffer who has given a great deal to the Judiciary Committee during the past three years. Ed has made his influence felt, and he will be missed.

Ed came to the Judiciary Committee in 1999 to work as my counsel in the Nominations and Constitutional Law unit. He served me admirably in that position. The next year, Ed became chief counsel to Senator SESSIONS' subcommittee, and he continued to contribute substantively to many issues handled by the full committee. Ed's reputation as a smart, creative, and effective lawyer is well-earned.

As Senator SESSIONS said, the Senate's loss is someone else's gain. Ed will be joining the Birmingham, AL, law firm of Balch & Bingham, which will no doubt benefit greatly from the association.

I want my colleagues to know that, as Senator SCHUMER said in a recent Judiciary meeting, I have found Ed Haden to represent the best of what we are about. He is honorable and hard-working and someone who can be taken at his word. I thank Ed for his great service to me and the Judiciary Committee, and I wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business until 2 p.m.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I will be speaking on a number of things at appropriate times this afternoon. I ask the distinguished Presiding Officer, at what time do we turn to the Shedd nomination?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At 2 o'clock.

Mr. LEAHY. I thank the Chair. I commend the Chair for his interest in the proceedings here—something he always demonstrates when he is there. He has had the ability to serve in both bodies and we have what might be a little bit more of a leisurely technique over here. The Senator from Vermont is delighted to have the Senator from Florida as a Member of this body.

#### HOMETOWN HEROES SURVIVORS BENEFITS ACT OF 2002

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise to encourage the Senate to pass today the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act of 2002, H.R. 5334.

This multipartisan legislation is to improve the Department of Justice's Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program. This bill allows the families of public safety officers who suffer fatal heart attacks or strokes to qualify for Federal survivor benefits.

I commend those in the other body, including Congressmen ETHERIDGE, WELDON, HOYER, and OXLEY, for their

leadership and, I might also say, their fortitude on this important legislation. On the last night the other body was in session, Congressman ETHERIDGE stood as a sentry on the bridge and said nothing else is going forward until this goes through. And it did pass in the House. I am proud to be the original sponsor of the Senate version of the Hometown Heroes bill, S. 3114. I thank Senators COLLINS, JEFFORDS, LANDRIEU, and DURBIN for joining me as cosponsors.

This legislation should not be in any way controversial. It is supported by the Fraternal Order of Police; National Association of Police Organizations; Congressional Fire Services Institute; International Association of Arson Investigators; International Association of Fire Chiefs; International Association of Fire Fighters; National Fire Protection Association; National Volunteer Fire Council; North American Fire Training Directors; International Fire Buff Association; National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians; American Ambulance Association; American Federation of State, County Municipal Employees. Actually, I will not list them all, but there are 50 additional national organizations.

Public safety officers act with an unwavering commitment to the safety and protection of their fellow citizens, and it is always the case that they are willing to selflessly sacrifice their lives to provide safe and reliable emergency services to their communities. Hundreds of public safety officers nationwide lose their lives, and thousands more are injured while performing duties that put them at great physical risk.

Although we know that PSOB benefits can never be a substitute for the loss of a loved one, the families of all our fallen heroes should be eligible to collect these funds.

The PSOB program authorizes a one-time financial payment to the eligible survivors of Federal, State, and local public safety officers for all line-of-duty deaths. A number of other things are in the bill. We have improved this PSOB program on numerous occasions—we did it in the Patriot Act—but, unfortunately, the inclusion of on-duty heart attack and stroke victims in the program has not been addressed.

This bill fixes that loophole to ensure that the survivors of public safety officers who die of heart attacks and other cardiac-related deaths in the line of duty, or within 24 hours of a triggering effect while on duty—regardless of whether or not a traumatic injury occurs at the time of the heart attack or stroke—are eligible to receive financial assistance. Heart attack and cardiac-related deaths account for almost half of all firefighter fatalities and an average of 13 police officer deaths each year.

It is time for the Senate to show its support and appreciation for these extraordinarily brave and heroic public safety officers by joining the House and

passing the Hometown Heroes Survivors Benefits Act.

Mr. President, I understand it has been cleared on this side of the aisle. I hope that my friends on the other side of the aisle will let this bill pass. We are willing on this side of the aisle to pass it, but there has been objection on the other side. I hope that objection will be withdrawn and this will pass so that we can join what has been already done in the other body.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEAHY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I rise to speak in favor of the legislation just referred to by the distinguished Senator from Vermont. I have a particular interest in this legislation because in my former governmental capacity as the State treasurer, insurance commissioner, and State fire marshal of Florida, I had the occasion to come to a great appreciation of the role of the firefighter, the extraordinary courage that firefighters display, and the extraordinary amount of property and life they save.

Fortunately, that was etched into the consciousness of America as a result of what we saw on September 11—not only the police, the firemen, but so many public service personnel who responded under those conditions. So I want to add my voice in support of the legislation referred to by Senator LEAHY and to those on the other side of the aisle who might be putting a hold on this legislation.

There is an extreme risk to the occupation of firefighter. We understand that risk more clearly based on what we saw of the bravery and the devotion to duty expressed on September 11. But that bravery and devotion to duty goes on day in and day out in the firehouses in communities across this Nation. These firefighters should be appropriately compensated when infirmity and disaster strikes them.

Mr. President, I wanted to add my name in support of the distinguished Senator from Vermont and his bill.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BINGAMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.